During the last one year, the activities of KVKs have benefited more than 93 lakh farmers through training and extension programmes on improved agricultural technology. The beneficiary farmers were also involved in 20,002 on farm trials and 74,732 frontline demonstrations, including hybrids of different crops, in order to establish the production potential of improved technology on the farmers' fields. Provision has been made for e-linkage of KVKs and for establishment of facilities like the mobile diagnostic-cum-exhibition units; soil-and water-testing labs; rain-water harvesting structures; basic plant health diagnostics; minimal processing; besides support to Directorate of Extension of SAUs for knowledge empowerment of KVKs. During the same period, 11.53 lakh farmers and 0.90 lakh extension personnel were trained to update their knowledge and skills on improved agricultural technologies.

As a result, the country has the record food production of 233.88 million tones during the year 2008-2009 (fourth advanced estimate). All time high record of wheat production of 80.58 million tones and of rice 99.15 million tones was achieved during 2008-09 (fourth advanced estimates).

Further, Government of India has launched a National Food Security Mission (NFSM) targeting three important foodgrain crops - rice, wheat and pulses. The total outlay of the Mission for the Eleventh Plan period is Rs.4882.48 crore. NFSM aims at achieving the additional production of 10 million tones of rice, 8 million tones of wheat and 2 million tones of pulses by 2011-12 through increased adoption of improved and proven crop production and protection technologies such as hybrids and high-yielding varieties; resource conservation technologies; integrated management of nutrients, pests and weeds; and improved tillage and other farm implements.

Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in addition, is also engaged in dissemination of its technologies through ICAR Institutes, State Agricultural Universities and Farmers Associations. Under this programme, IARI aims at developing village-based integrated models for higher farmer productivity and profitability. The high yielding varieties of crops, vegetables, flowers, fruits, etc. along with production technologies are ; being promoted by the IARI in identified village clusters across the country for farmer-to-farmer extension. About 14000 farmers/entrepreneurs, development departments officials, students, NGO representatives, etc., from almost all parts of the country visited the Agricultural Technology Information Centre, IARI during the year 2008-09 for farm advisory, diagnostic services, purchase of technological inputs/projects and training. About 2500 farmers/entrepreneurs from 17 states were able to get information on various aspects of agriculture through Pusa Help-line and Kisan Call Centre.

The participatory quality seed production programme has been instrumental in spreading the quality seeds of cereals, pulses and oilseeds in wider area, the efforts is continuing to empower the farming community for the adoption and diffusion of latest technologies in identified locations, and it is likely to boost further, the production of not only food grains and pulses but that of oilseeds, fruits and vegetables too.

Drought situation in the country

148. SHRI SHYAMAL CHAKRABORTY:
SHRI MOINUL HASSAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the States facing drought situation;

(b) whether the Ministry earlier undermined the gravity of drought situation in the country;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps Government has taken so far to face the challenge?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) During South-West Monsoon 2009 the following 12 States have declared drought/drought like conditions/scarcity in the entire State or some districts of the State:

1) Andhra Pradesh

2) Assam

3) Bihar

4) Himachal Pradesh

5) Jharkhand

6) Karnataka

7) Madhya Pradesh

8) Maharashtra

9) Manipur

10) Nagaland

11) Rajasthan

12) Uttar Pradesh

(b) and (c) The Government was constantly monitoring the situation with the India Meteorological Department and the State Governments and undertook such steps as required to mitigate the crisis.

(d) The steps taken so far to face the challenge are given in the enclosed statement [Refer to the Statement appended to the Answer to USQ 133] Part (a)

Future of agriculture

149. SHRI SHYAMAL CHAKRABORTY:
SHRI MOINUL HASSAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state: